

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 FEA-01 ERDA-05 AID-05 CEA-01

CIAE-00 CIEP-01 COME-00 DODE-00 EB-08 FPC-01 H-01

INR-07 INT-05 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 OMB-01 PM-04

USIA-06 OES-06 SP-02 SS-15 STR-04 TRSE-00 ACDA-07

IGA-02 SAJ-01 /114 W

-----301245Z 116019 /41

R 301148Z JAN 77

FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1050

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

R/USINT BAGHDAD 233

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMCONSUL DHAHRAN

AMEMBASSY DOHA

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEHRAN 0908

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, ENRG, IR,SA

SUBJ: SHAH SAYS RISE IN SAUDI AND UAE OIL PRODUCTION

WOULD BE HOSTILE ACT AGAINST IRAN

1. DURING 90-MINUTE INTERVIEW WITH FRENCH TELEVISION
PROMINENTLY PUBLISHED IN IRANIAN PRESS JANUARY 29, SHAH WAS
ASKED TO COMMENT ON A STATEMENT ATTRIBUTED TO YAMANI THAT
THERE WOULD BE A FALL IN OIL EXPORTS FOR 11 OPEC COUNTRIES,
IRAN'S EXPORTS FALLING 25 PERCENT. SHAH REPLIED, "THIS IS
POSSIBLE. IF IT IS THE CAUSE OF AN OVERPRODUCTION BY SAUDI
ARABIA AND OF ANOTHER COUNTRY WHICH FOLLOWS IT, IT IS AN ACT
OF AGRESSION AGAINST US."

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2. QUESTIONER CONTINUED ASKING IF SHAH THOUGHT THAT THE
"POLICY WHICH IS IN THE PROCESS OF BEING ADOPTED BY SAUDI
ARABIA IS DEFINITELY HOSTILE TO YOU." SHAH REPLIED,"IF
IT (I.E. SAUDI ARABIA) PUTS IT INTO PRACTICE, IT IS
HOSTILE TO US, IT IS NOT SERVING THE CAUSE OF HUMANITY,
BUT IT IS DOING US HARM."

3. WHEN ANOTHER QUESTIONER SUGGESTED THIS WAS VERY SIMPLY THE LAW OF THE MARKETPLACE, SHAH TOOK A DIFFERENT DIRECTION IN HIS REPLY. HE SAID, "WELL, IF IT IS THE LAW OF THE MARKETPLACE, THEN WE CAN DEFEND OURSELVES IN ANOTHER MANNER. IF ONE DOES NOT SELL YOU (I.E. THE WESTERN WORLD) MORE THAN A THIRD OF WHAT WE CAN PRODUCE, WHAT DO YOU THINK THE PRICE OF OIL WOULD BE?"

4. REMAINDER OF WIDE RANGING INTERVIEW WILL FOLLOW BY SEPTTEL. FRENCH EMBASSY HAS REQUESTED EXACT TEXT FROM PARIS, TO COMPARE WITH TEXT PRINTED IN LOCAL FRENCH NEWSPAPER, BUT THIS MAY TAKE SOME TIME IN COMING.

5. COMMENT: IN DISCUSSING INTERVIEW WITH ECONOMIC MINISTER OF BRITISH EMBASSY CHALMERS, CHARGE FOUND MUTUAL AGREEMENT THAT SHAH'S WORDS WERE NOT LIKELY THROWN OUT ON SPUR OF THE MOMENT, BUT REPRESENT CONSIDERED POSITION. SPECULATING, BRITISH AND WE THINK THERE MAY BE SUBSTANCE TO THE IDEA THAT IRANIANS PERHAPS THOUGHT THEY HAD SOME SORT OF TACIT (OR EVEN EXPLICIT) AGREEMENT WITH SAUDIS THAT EACH WOULD TRY TO SELL AT HIS OWN PRICE, AND SAUDIS WOULD NOT SUBSTANTIALLY INCREASE PRODUCTION AT IRANIAN EXPENSE. SOME REPORTS WE HAVE SEEN IN OTHER CHANNELS APPEAR TO SUPPORT SUCH A POSSIBILITY. SHAH'S CONCERN THAT SAUDIS WILL NOT LIVE UP TO SUCH AN AGREEMENT MAY BE BEHIND HIS SHARP REMARKS IN INTERVIEW. WE WOULD BE INTERESTED IN ADDRESSEE COMMENTS, PARTICULARLY REACTIONS FROM JIDDA AND ABU DHABI.
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MIKLOS

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